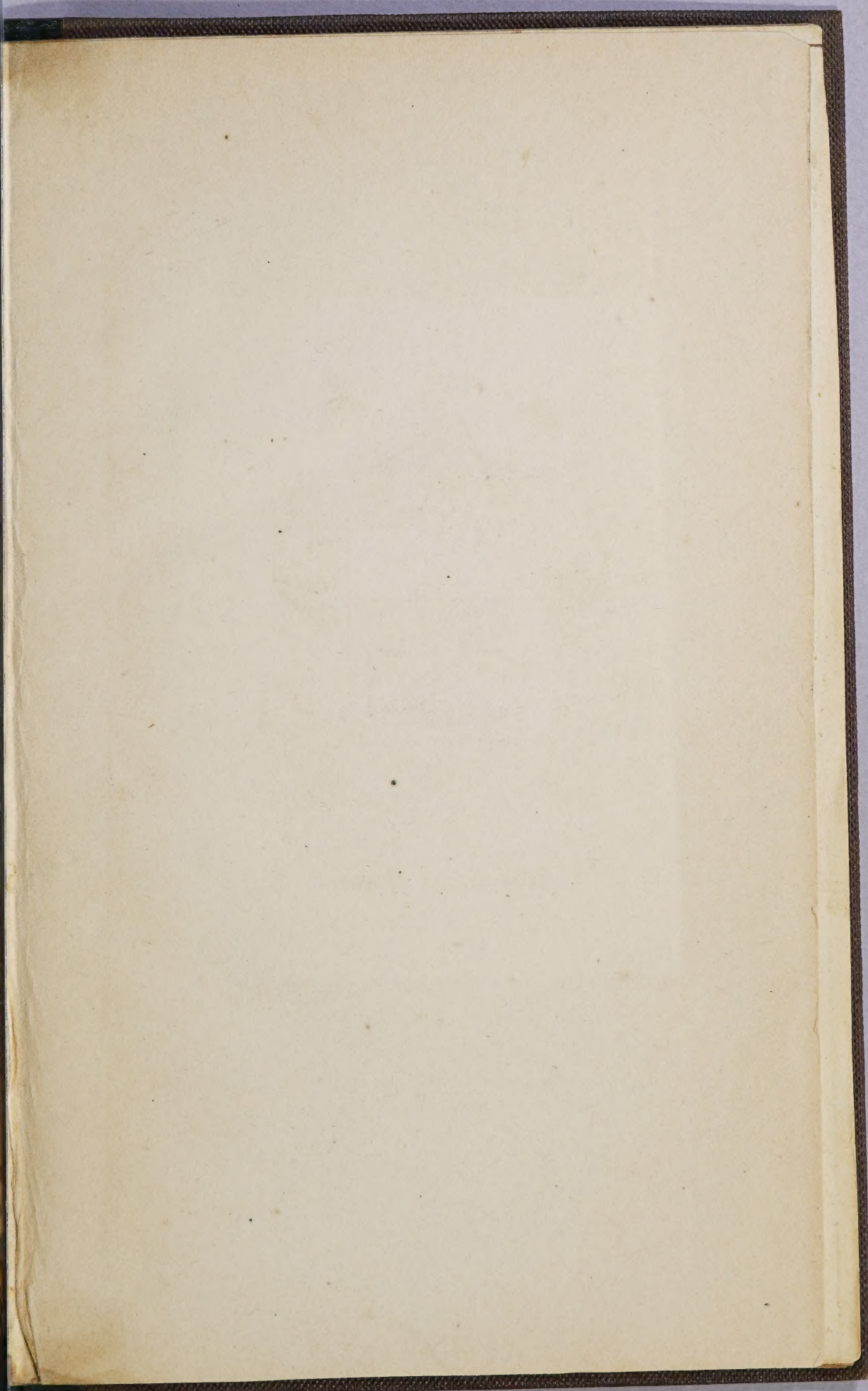


John Carter Brown.



76:8.

C

By Adam Ferguson

139

R E M A R K S

ON A

PAMPHLET LATELY PUBLISHED
BY DR. PRICE,

INTITLED,

OBSERVATIONS on the NATURE of CIVIL
LIBERTY, the PRINCIPLES of GOVERNMENT,
and the JUSTICE and POLICY of the WAR with
AMERICA, &c.

IN A

LETTER from a GENTLEMAN in the Country
to a MEMBER of PARLIAMENT.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL IN THE STRAND,
MDCCLXXVI.

JOHN CARTER BROWN.

PAMPHLET LATELY PUBLISHED
BY DR. PRICE

INVESTIGATION OF THE
OBSERVATIONS OF THE
LATELY PUBLISHED
OF THE
AMERICA, &c.

IN A
LETTER FROM A
JOHN CARTER BROWN

LONDON:
PRINTED BY T. CARLIS IN THE STRAND.
1861.

RPJCB

R E M A R K S

O N A

PAMPHLET LATELY PUBLISHED
BY DR. PRICE.

In a Letter to a Member of Parliament.

S I R,

I SEND you some Remarks upon Dr. Price's Pamphlet, concerning which you do me the honour to desire my opinion. A gentleman who gives his name to the Public is intitled to have the fairest construction put upon his words, and I shall be extremely sorry if, in differing from Dr. Price, any expression escape from me that is too abrupt for the respect that is due to him. As I am a mere commentator, I am likely to be as dull as the rest of my fraternity, but shall, nevertheless, abide by the order, and confine myself to the matter, that is suggested by my Author.

B

You

You will please to observe, that the Doctor rests his argument on a definition of Civil Liberty, which is therefore a principal subject of these Remarks. He considers Liberty under four general divisions, *Physical Liberty*, *Moral Liberty*, *Religious Liberty*, and *Civil Liberty* *. The first is the *principle of spontaneity*. The second is the *power of following our own sense of right and wrong*. The third, the *power of exercising the religion we like best*. And the fourth, or Civil Liberty, is the *power of a civil society or state to govern itself by its own discretion*.

The Doctor, in the following inference from all these definitions collated together, puts Liberty in contradistinction to Restraint, and makes Restraint, in every case, the essence of Slavery. In all these cases, he says, *there is a force which stands opposed to the agent's own will, and which, as far as it operates, produces servitude*. And he concludes the whole deduction with observing, that *as far as in any instance the operation of any cause comes in to restrain the power of self-government, so far slavery is introduced*. Nor do I think, he adds, that a *preciser idea than this of Liberty and Slavery can be formed*.

* Sect. I. p. 2.

I am under the necessity, however, of owning, that this idea is somewhat perplexing to me. It does not appear, that upon this idea of Liberty any civil community can be formed without introducing slavery. For even where the collective body are sovereigns, they are seldom unanimous, and the minority must ever submit to a power that stands opposed to their own will.

In this, however, the loss of Liberty may be supposed unavoidable; for it is common to say, that men, by entering into society, give up a part of their Natural Liberty.

But there is yet another difficulty. If Liberty be opposed to Restraint, I am afraid it is inconsistent with the great end of civil government itself, which is to give people security from the effect of crimes and disorders, and to preserve the peace of mankind.

The Liberty of any single man, in this sense of a freedom from restraint, would be the servitude of all. In Turkey, perhaps in Brandenburg, there are persons who pretend to this Liberty; but I believe that no one can devise a more plentiful source of slavery than this. The Liberty of every separate district or corporation in a state would be national independence; and as

far as the humour for it should spread, would threaten every community with the loss of every incorporated member that has a pretence for separation, or a fancy to set up for itself.

I confess I am somewhat surpris'd that Dr. Price, who quotes Montesquieu with so much regard on other occasions, should have overlooked what he has said on this. Among the other mistaken notions of Liberty, this celebrated writer observes, *That some have confounded the Power of the people with the Liberty of the people**. *That in democracies the people seem to do what they please; but that Liberty does not consist in doing what we please. It consists in being free to do what we ought to incline, and in not being obliged to do what we ought not to incline†*. We ought to remember, he continues, *that Independence is one thing, and Liberty another. That if any citizen were free to do what he pleased, this would be an extinction of Liberty, for every one else would have the same freedom‡*.

If the Doctor persist in his definition of Civil Liberty, it will be difficult to support the high encomium which he bestows upon it. For it would be a real curse to numbers of mankind

* L'Esprit des Loix, livre ii. c. 2.

† Ibid. c. 3.

‡ Ibid.

to be left to do what they please. Certain instances we have had of this Liberty in the case of despotic princes, who were taught to think that they had a right to do what they pleased; but they were, in consequence of this Liberty, the completest wretches that have appeared in the history of mankind.

Whether we say or no with Montesquieu, that the power of the people is not the liberty of the people, it may be said with confidence, that the power of the people is not the happiness of the people. Corrupt and vicious men, assembled in great bodies, cannot have a greater curse bestowed upon them, than the power of governing themselves.

It is possible that the Doctor may have meant to qualify his definition and the encomium of Civil Liberty, by supposing, that it was preceded by Moral Liberty; and if he did, this would be rather an awkward way of informing us, that Liberty consists in the freedom to do what is just and innocent. In the mean time, and till Moral Liberty is fully established in the world, we shall do well to prepare some restraint for the inclinations of men, and be contented with a Liberty which secures to us the possession of our rights, while it restrains us from invading the rights of others.

Here, however, I am obliged to look forward some pages *, and must confess, that the Doctor himself has qualified his description of Liberty in some such manner as this: *A free state, he says, at the same time that it is free itself, makes all its members free, by excluding licentiousness, and guarding their persons and property and good name against insult.* That is to say, when we bring together the two parts of the Doctor's description, that a free state produces servitude, to produce Liberty. Or, as he concludes the paragraph himself, that *Government restrains Liberty, when used to destroy Liberty.*

This collision of words, I confess, renders the precision of the Doctor's former idea somewhat suspicious; but we must be contented with the good meaning, and only regret, that the qualification of the general definition had not come sooner, and that it is not more uniformly kept in view through the piece. If a writer should insist, that the inhabitants of St. Giles's have a right to seize the houses in Grosvenor Square, and afterwards, upon a difficulty stated, should qualify his doctrine by saying, that he affirmed the right only on a supposition that they had

* Page 12 and 13.

bought the subjects in question, and had paid for them, his doctrine might be true on the whole ; but his manner of stating it, by leaving out so important a condition till it was required to solve an objection, especially if he dropt it, afterwards through the whole of his argument might appear somewhat exceptionable. It is probable that some of the parties concerned would be in such haste to avail themselves of the right, that they would not stay to think of the condition. And I apprehend with some regret, that the Doctor may have readers who will reason on his definition of Liberty, and think themselves entitled to do what they please, without attending to the qualification that is afterwards brought to explain it.

My impatience to have a satisfactory account of this important subject, by collating together the descriptions and limitations of my Author, has carried me a few pages too fast ; I think myself now, however, authorised to conclude with the consent of the Doctor, that Civil Liberty is not precisely a power to do what we please, but the security of our rights ; and that a person may be free, although contrary to his own will he is obliged to pay his debts, and even to contribute to the revenue of the state. And if the Doctor insists that Liberty still implies
a freedom

a freedom from restraint, he will please to observe, that nothing can give a more complete freedom from unjust restraint, than the perfect security that we cannot be wronged. This is the freedom which Montesquieu holds forth to our esteem; and I presume, it is that Liberty on which Dr. Price bestows his encomium, notwithstanding his apparent partiality to the freedom of doing what we please. I now return to the place at which I met my Author*.

The Doctor, in every step of his argument, is somewhat hurried by his own definition. *In every free state, he says, every man is his own legislator: all taxes are free gifts for public services.* It may be fair to ask in what part of the world such a state does, or ever did exist? Or what sort of laws thieves and pickpockets are likely to make against theft? Or how much of his property the miser is likely to bring to the coffers of the Public?

In most free states the populace have as much need to be guarded against the effect of their own folly and errors, as against the usurpation of any other person whatever. And the essence of political Liberty is such an establish-

ment as gives power to the wise, and safety to all. The exercise of power in popular assemblies has a mixture of effects, good and bad. It teaches a people, as it did the Athenians, to become wits, critics, and orators. It gives to every man one chance against being oppressed, in allowing him to appear for himself. But it places him when accused before rash, precipitate, prejudiced, and inequitable judges; he is no more his own legislator, than he is the master of the people. And he is in fact subject to a power, which is of all others the most unstable, capricious, and arbitrary: bound by no law, and subject to no appeal. For this reason, Mr. Montesquieu has very wisely said, that Democracy and Aristocracy are not by their nature free governments*.

They are inferior in this respect to certain species of monarchy, where law is more fixed and the abuses of power are better restrained.

The Doctor farther observes †, or concludes, from his definition, *that Civil Liberty in the most perfect degree can be enjoyed only in small states, where every member is capable of giving his suffrage in person, and of being chosen into public*

* Esprit des Loix, liv. ix. c. 5.

† Page 7.

offices. It is true that democracy is tolerable only in small states; and the Doctor certainly means to speak of democracy, when he makes this inference on the subject of Liberty. But even in the smallest states, the preservation of public consistency and justice, the security of private rights, must ever recommend some mixture of aristocratical power, that may prove a check on the caprice of the people; and such a mixture took place in all the happiest institutions of antiquity.

The Doctor owns *, that although Liberty be most perfect in small states, it is not altogether banished from great ones: For, *where all the members of a state are not capable of giving their suffrages on public measures individually and personally, they may do this by the appointment of substitutes or representatives.*

In this concession, the Doctor begins to elude the force of his own definition; and when we consider how little in some cases the constituent may know of what his representative does, it appears, that by this device, men may be their own legislators, without so much as knowing that laws are enacted or proposed. And even

* Page 7.

America, at the distance of three thousand miles of sea, may enjoy its freedom by sending substitutes or representatives to the Parliament of Great Britain.

This indeed is one of the happiest institutions of mankind, and might be of use in small as well as in great states, by giving every order of the people that share in the legislature of their country, which is necessary to guard their own rights, without enabling them to usurp on the rights of others. But I must still contend, that the Liberty of every class and order is not proportioned to the power they enjoy, but to the security they have for the preservation of their rights.

In stating this fortunate principle however, the Doctor very reasonably recommends a fair and adequate representation, and makes such a description of pretended inadequate representation, as I am afraid can hardly fail of being applied to the government of Great Britain*. The representatives of seven millions are chosen by less than three hundred thousand, and the whole is attended with circumstances that make the Doctor exclaim, *it is an abuse of language to say, that*

* Page 10.

such a state possesses Liberty. And that rather than be governed in such a manner, it would perhaps be better to be governed by the will of One Man without any representation.

The fact in our history, I believe, is, that there never entered into the head of any person able to bring it about, except Oliver Cromwell, the idea of having the people of Great Britain represented. Persons of a certain description were in the way of attending the king in his wars and in his Parliaments. It appears that they considered this distinction rather as a burden than as a privilege. The kings were in use to grant exemptions to the officers of their court, and to others. The counties and boroughs that sent substitutes were obliged to give them wages; and sometimes, by the connivance of sheriffs, eluded the duty altogether. In process of time, however, a place in the King's Court of Parliament became of more consequence. Deputies became willing to serve without wages; boroughs revived their charters. Freeholders embraced their distinction as a privilege, and their representatives improved it into a formidable power, which became of the greatest importance to themselves and to their country. So little however are mankind commonly aware when they are laying in politics the

the foundation of the best superstructures. The spirit of the constitution, the design of the constitution, are the mere constructions of speculative men; at least, they only mean the effect of the constitution, which, notwithstanding the disdain of our Author, has been in many respects superior to the effect of any other constitution in the known world; and notwithstanding the high ideas of Liberty with which it is contrasted does actually bestow upon its subjects higher degrees of Liberty than any other people are known to enjoy.

It is known, that under all the defects of the British Legislation, the subject enjoys more security than was ever before enjoyed by any people; and this not accidentally, but by a very natural tendency of the constitution, by lodging legislation in the hands of persons interested in the justice of the laws which they make, and by giving to all the different orders of the state a power to reject or amend every law that is likely to be grievous on themselves. It is less material who elects, than it is who may be elected. For so long as no one can be elected without the qualifications of a British commoner, the interests of the Commons in the lower house is secure.

The experience of Europe, Asia, and Africa, should convince Dr. Price, that it is not better to be governed by one man than by such a representation: but this hasty expression of the Doctor, shows the danger of going so fast in search of ideal perfection, which is apt to make us despise what is attainable and obtained, for the sake of something impracticable, and sometimes absurd.

It is of great moment to extend the participation of power and government, as far as the circumstances and character of a people will permit; but extremely dangerous to confound this advantage with Civil or Political Liberty; for it may often happen, that to extend the participation of power, is to destroy Liberty. When all the powers of the Roman senate were transferred to the popular assemblies, the Liberty of Rome *came to an end*.

In general, to be free, is to be guided by one's own will; but licentiousness is its opposite.*

Dr. Price seems to forget his own definition of Liberty, and admits the restraint of crimes as necessary to it: nay, admits that Liberty is

* P. 11, 12.

not less infringed when the licentious multitude do what they please, than it is when a single person does so; although he seems to think, and perhaps justly, that the former infringement is the most repairable and the least pernicious of the two, p. 14.

Dr. Price has very justly observed, that the imputation of omnipotence to any government, except that of the strongest, the most numerous, or the greatest force, is absurd; and that even force cannot always secure obedience. It must be satisfied with the alternative of obedience, of tortures, or of death. Government, whatever be its origin, must employ various engines, of which force is but one; authority, respect, public confidence, persuasion, are the principal engines to be employed with the body of a well-meaning and innocent people: force is the engine to be employed against criminals and slaves. And the government of mere force, in every instance, either finds people slaves, or makes them so.

It is absurd to say, as some writers have said in the course of this paper-war, that there must be in every state one supreme uncontrollable power; for this never yet existed in any state whatever. The despotic Prince, in search of
such

such a power, finds, that he changes the control of assemblies, councils, civil departments, or of men of education and virtue only, to come under the control of Serjeants and Corporals. In our government, King, Lords, and Commons are not one power, but three collateral powers ; any one of which may stop the motions of all the rest. This observation, however, takes nothing from the authority of their joint acts wherever they concur, nor had any one till now, from the extreme settlements of British subjects in the old world, to their utmost migrations in the new, doubted the validity of any such act. Dr. Price seems to regret that the efforts formerly made by our fathers in behalf of Liberty are no longer repeated ; he should likewise regret, that our liberties are no longer attacked in the same manner as in the times of our fathers. The contest between the prerogative of the King and the privilege of Parliament is discontinued : the King has influence enough in Parliament to obtain the necessary supports of his government, though, I hope, never to obtain the smallest resignation of the people's right. In the contest of our times, the parties are the pretenders to office and the holders of office. A noble contest, though an ignoble cause. I must call it a noble contest, as it is undoubtedly one principle of life in our constitution. It
leads

leads one party to watch the motions of administration; and the other to be on their guard because they are watched. As the matter now stands, indeed, it is more the interest of opposition to stop the ordinary movement of government, than to prevent its *abuses*. If they can stop the ordinary course of government, the minister must withdraw to make way for themselves: but in preventing abuses, they only oblige him to change ill measures for good, and by this means to take a firmer hold of his power. I know that many ill consequences might be imputed to the state of our parties; but I am not for removing any one safe-guard to freedom, until we have found a better.

Dr. Price infers from his argument, that no one community can have *any power over the property or legislation of another, that is not incorporated with it by a just and adequate representation.*
P. 19.

In this passage, by the word Power, he certainly means the right to have such a power; for it is an undoubted fact, that many states have had the power. Even the admired and happy republics of Swisserland and Holland have their subject towns and provinces; and this nascent republic of New England too, if it

D

acquire

acquire the independence which, under the denomination of Liberty is projected for it, may come to have its subject towns and provinces, and, among the foremost, some of those who are now so ready to become partners of its revolt against the state.

I do not contend for the right to any such power in any actual case, but I contend not only for the reality of the power, but for the right likewise in some supposable cases. No writer on the law of nature, that I know of, has denied that states or bodies politic may perform every act that any private party can perform; and if this be admitted, it follows, that they may, either by contract or forfeiture, become tributary or subject to another state or body politic, as much as a single man may become the servant or debtor of another single man by stipulation or forfeiture.

This maxim of the law of nature, I confess, does not bind the Americans to contribute to the supply of the British Empire, unless it can be shewn that they have received all the benefit of subjects; and therefore have stipulated to perform all the duties of subjects, by the same tacit convention that binds every inhabitant of Great Britain.

I agree

I agree with the Doctor, that the subjection of one state to another is inexpedient, and often calamitous for both; but this will not preclude one member of the same state, who has always made common cause with another, from having a very just claim to expect a joint contribution to the common support.

After what has passed between Great Britain and her Colonies, whoever pretends that Great Britain should drop every claim of a return, and the Colonies refuse to make any return, under every possible security to their property, must have very high notions of the generosity incumbent on the one party, and as low notions of what is incumbent on the other. Nay, but they have traded with us, and this is enough: and have not we traded with them? Have they given us their goods for nothing? Or have they been careful to receive value? Or have they taken less value than other nations would have taken? These questions should be answered before we are told that their trade has repaid us for all the blood and treasure we have expended in the common cause, and before it can be admitted that in the heights of prosperity, at which they may arrive, they are not bound under any form, or with any precautions, for the remainder of their property, to contribute any

part of it whatever to the common supplies of the Empire.

The Doctor owns that one state may become bound to indemnify another for an injury done them, or be bound to give security against future injury; but who can set limits to the possible rights thus established in the claim of one state against another. It is impossible to tell how long a state may be tributary, or how much it may pay before it has acquitted a debt of indemnification; or what precaution may be necessary to obtain, for the future, a sufficient security against injuries. The Romans, when they recovered Campania from its revolted inhabitants, and from Hanibal, thought proper, for their own future security, to abolish the Municipal Senate, and assemblies of that province: Such meetings they considered as a standing conspiracy against themselves. In this I shall not pretend to justify their conduct, but suppositions may be made that would be sufficient to justify it, and such as I shall neither be willing to make nor apply to the American Colonies: But let no one contend, that in the plenitude of madness, they may not forfeit more to the state, than any one would be willing to exact from them. I will not say what an impetuous state, like that of the Romans, so often
quoted

quoted in a similar case, would have exacted and done; but if we are to hope that one party will not inflict the penalty, we may hope likewise that the other will not incur it.

Writers on the Law of Nature sustain the validity of a fair contract in all cases where the performance is possible or lawful. That it is both possible and lawful for one corporation or body politic to submit themselves to the laws, and contribute to the supplies of another, no one will doubt; that all corporations and bodies politic belonging to the same state are actually under such a contract, no body ever questioned.

No one can bind himself to receive the religious opinions of another, because his opinions are not in his power, but he may bind himself, if he pleases, to pay a shilling in the pound of his estate.

But can one generation bind another? No doubt, in every lawful contract, as much as any person can bind his heirs, or as much as the late King of France could bind the successors to his crown to leave Canada in the possession of the English. The Doctor's reasoning on this subject takes away the obligation of treaties, or at best

best makes them temporary agreements, to last for the lives of those who made them.

It is confessed, that favours voluntarily conferred, cannot be stated as a ground of debt; but they who rest so much on the affection and attachment of the Colonies to the Mother Country, ought to allow something for the favours done by the Mother Country to her Colonies.

The Doctor attempts a distinction between the separation of parts in the same kingdom, and the separation of parts in the same empire, which I confess I cannot comprehend; but if he lays so great a stress on the difference of names, he may be told, that Great Britain and its dependencies is not an Empire, but a kingdom. I see no warrantable part for mankind to act under either denomination, but to acquiesce in the government which Providence has given to their kingdom or their empire, until they are sure that they do not change it for the worse; and in this, reformers upon general principle, however sanguine, are far from being secure.

It is the fashion, however, I observe, with some writers, to give high expectations of the great perfection to which human nature is tending, especially in America; for I think Old
England,

England, by their account, is degenerating. But a republic extending 1200 miles in one direction, and without any known bounds in the other, is still an experiment to be made in the history of mankind. Our ancestors made the experiment in vain, within narrower limits; they too had high expectations of what mankind were about to exhibit; they thought the millenium and the kingdom of Christ were at hand, but they found, in their stead, the iron reign of an usurper, supported by military force. It is charity, perhaps, to pray that if the Colonies must break with us for ever, they may be more faithfully served by those they employ, than they themselves have served their country. The officer, perhaps, has not yet appeared, who, on that emergency, is to dismiss the Congress as Cromwell did the Parliament. But what title have they to hope for an exemption from the too common fate of mankind; the fate that has ever attended Democracies attempted on too large a scale; that of plunging at once into military government? The armies they form against their country will need no other title to become their masters. It is even fair to conclude, from the history of the world, that there is no time of more danger than those times of sanguine, of florid, and enthusiastic expectation,

in which mankind are bent on great and hazardous change.

Americans, however, may still be thought out of this question; they seek no innovation; they are the parties that contend for the ancient establishment. Their plea, however, I hope is better founded than this *. The Parliament of Great Britain has made laws for the Colonies from their first establishments. The charters of the Colonies subjected them to taxes, and they have been taxed by acts of the British Parliament: Matters therefore were in their ordinary train, when the Americans stopt short, and would proceed no farther. I will not, however, insist, that the change of circumstances may not have required a change of policy; and that, as the Americans are growing rich, and have something that tempts rapacity, they ought to have better security for their property, than the continuance of former practice will perhaps bestow. But, in this view of the contest, what is to be done if the Colonies have a right to contend for new securities? Let them apply to the state with proper professions of duty, and representations of the dangers they apprehended; but no one

* See the Rights of Great Britain asserted against the Claims of America.

can pretend that the state ought to yield up the ordinary way of constituting a revenue, till a new and better way is substituted in its place.

The Doctor refers to the example of the Romans, and bids us consider how much they suffered for having been the tyrants of other nations, and I shall never recommend to any state to follow their example.

Dr. Price,* has deduced, from our leading principle, viz. *that every restraint on the will of man is an introduction of slavery*, a number of consequences that seem to him incapable of being disputed. There is, indeed, nothing that requires to be disputed, but his principle itself, for with that, the consequences must fall. Its application, as he observes, to the present question with America, is obvious; and the principle indeed seems to be made for the application, and is fitted to justify the desire of national independence, under the name of Civil Liberty. The change of words has a mighty effect, even in the frame of an argument. There is not an English gentleman, I believe, that would not shrink from the thought of reducing millions of his fellow-subjects to a state of servitude, and as few that will not be seized with indignation in

* Part II. p. 31.

being told that the Colonies aim at independence, and will contribute no longer to the joint support of their common country.

We shall be told, however, that the Colonies do not aim at independence.—Yes, if they aim at the Liberty designed for them by Dr. Price. If they aim only at security to their rights and properties, let the question be fairly stated, and put in the train of pacific discussion.

The Doctor is pleased to say, that the question of right, with all liberal inquirers, ought to be; not what jurisdiction over them, precedents, statutes, and charters give, but what reason and equity, and the rights of humanity give: This, he says, *in truth, is a question which no kingdom has ever had occasion to agitate.* It is certainly the first time it ever was proposed that men having any political establishments, statutes, precedents, or charters, should at once demolish, cancel, or set aside all the maxims, records, or conventions on which every party must rely for the preservation of his property, and from which alone he can learn the relation in which he stands to the state, or to his fellow-subjects. Why has no kingdom ever had occasion to agitate such a question? Have no parties arose in politics before? Have no districts or corporations of the same community claimed privileges and exemptions

exemptions that have been disputed with them? It is well known that such questions have been agitated, and that parties uniformly referred to precedents, statutes, and charters for a determination. To bring questions of this sort to any supposed tribunal of reason, of equity, and humanity, is to set human affairs afloat upon the sea of opinion and private interest, and to deprive men of those charts, landmarks, and rules of sailing, by which they were in use to be guided, and to direct their cause.

It is certainly true, that no nation ever planted Colonies with so liberal or so noble a hand as England has done. But she has done so on the plan of those very charters, statutes, and precedents which are now to be set aside. And her having done so much for her Colonies, is surely an unfavourable topic from which to infer the right of her Colonies to do nothing for her. It is indeed to be lamented, that, in the place of argument, this controversy is hastening to employ the sword. Blessed were he that could bring it to a different issue. But I hope, that neither the Americans, nor the advocates that plead for them, will think, that every concession should come from Great Britain. They have hitherto said to the King of Great Britain, on his own territory, as the Romans said to

Pyrrhus and to Hannibal, " You must evacuate " this land before we will treat ;" and if this were granted them, it is likely they would be ready to declare what further concessions they expect from the Crown and Legislature of their country.

The Doctor * proposes to determine the justice of the war by the object of it ; and this he collects from a statute moved and carried in Parliament, under the auspices of a noble Lord, and of honourable gentlemen, who are the declared friends of America, and in whose intentions the Americans repose such confidence, that they have never once, as I have been told, complained of this declaratory law. From this state of the case ; that is, from the silence of America on this law, and from the friendly intentions towards America of those who obtained it ; I am inclined to think, that this law cannot be the ground of the quarrel. I rather suspect, that we are going to war about taxation and property, than about speculative declarations of right ; and that one party is very indifferent about laws that are to bring them nothing, and others about laws that are to take nothing from them. And on this supposition I

* Part II. Sect. i. Page 34.

should

should think, the fair way of determining the justice of the claim, would be by stating two questions. The first, Whether the charters, statutes, and precedents; that is to say, whether the present constitution of Great Britain respecting her Colonies; has committed a power of Taxation over America, to the legislature of Great Britain. If this question shall be decided in the affirmative, as I am persuaded it must be so decided, it will follow, that the Legislature of Great Britain has yet incurred no blame in urging a claim in which they were justified by the constitution of the state.

I however most willingly admit a second question. Has the situation of affairs undergone any change that require a change of policy and of measures, that deserve the attention of the Legislature, and on which the Colonies ought to be heard with candour and patience, so as to avoid, if possible, inconveniencies to which, in a new situation, old precedents, and even statutes and charters might carry us?

The principal changes in our circumstances are, that our Colonies, under the influence of charters and statutes, have increased in resources and in people: that Great Britain is heavily burdened, and that now, from being at an ordinary

dinary expence in nursing and protecting her Colonies, she would gladly draw some share of the public supplies from thence. This situation, I confess, is new, and may require some suitable policy. If the Parliament of Great Britain, as formerly, be to grant the money of the Americans; the latter may think their property not secure. At the same time, if any party independent of the Parliament of Great Britain be to grant money to the Crown; this constitution loses one of its principal securities, the dependence of the Crown for supplies on the Commons of Great Britain.

Here is a difficulty, on which it is not surprising that parties should differ, and inadvertently get into a very hearty quarrel, in which both may suffer extremely before any one is able to find a solution.

In stating the question, I have passed over many things which other persons may think of great consequence, in order to come at what I apprehend every one will think so.

I do not write in order to persuade my correspondent, that the Legislature of Great Britain should retain their unlimited power of granting the money of America. But I write under a
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deep conviction, that the Americans ought to contribute to the supplies of the empire. And that they ought now, before an indemnity is granted for the past, to specify the taxes on which they will establish a revenue for the state, and which, without augmenting the burden on them, may increase with their resources their population and the immunities given to their trade; but subject to no other alteration, without the consent of Parliament and their own. Or if they choose rather to pay some fixed proportion of what the Commons of Great Britain from time to time levy on themselves, let them have it in the mode which they themselves, or better judgments than mine, can determine.

They have been told, that the Parliament of Great Britain will not tax them, if they are pleased to tax themselves. No specific tax, no specific sum has been mentioned to them; and yet this proposition, coming from the Commons of Great Britain, has, by themselves and by their advocates on this side the water, been termed an insult. The plain English, I am afraid, is, that the Americans do not think any supply from thence due to the state of Great Britain. Or, that their advocates do not think they ought to grant any such supply till they themselves are in power. The Americans may
flatter

flatter themselves, that if the party that now opposes Government, were in power, they would obtain every favour and every concession. But they may be assured, that no Minister in the councils of the King will surrender the undoubted right of this country, to require from America some share in the supplies which are necessary to support the the Imperial Crown and the Empire of Great Britain. If precautions be wanting to secure the rights of that people in the mode of attaining this necessary end, the parties may still have an opportunity of entering into a candid and fair discussion of this subject. Commissioners are soon to be appointed by the King, who are to accompany his fleets and armies across the Atlantic, doubtless with the humane and merciful intention to spare, by pacific means, if that is yet possible, the effusion of blood.

In this light the Colonies ought certainly to consider this lenient measure. And if they do, I think they ought to be ready on their part, to meet the advances of the King with dutiful representations of the securities they deem necessary in the future administration of government respecting them.— If no such step is taken, we may fairly conclude, that they are intoxicated with the idea of separation and independence, and that they are resolved

solved not to grant supplies in any mode, or in any proportion whatever. And if this be their resolution, I am afraid the sword must strike as well as be raised; and till they exculpate themselves from the design of withdrawing their allegiance, and every reasonable mode of supply from the Crown of Great-Britain, the wounds they receive will appear to come from the hand of Justice, and will remain unpitied by many persons, who are far from wishing to invade their liberties.

It is likely that the councils of the King will incur more censure for the reluctance with which they have armed the kingdom against this revolt, than they will for any supposed precipitation in urging matters to extremities. But it is a noble error to have been slow in believing that British subjects, unmolested in their religion or in their liberties, still in possession of that government by which they had arrived at so much prosperity, untouched in their property by any unprecedented invasion; and if assailed, only assailed by penal statutes, to make compensation for an outrage done to the property and the trade of their fellow-subjects: It was, I say, a noble error to be slow in believing that British subjects, under this description, would have drawn upon themselves and this nation all the horrors of a civil war. If we were taught to think them pusillanimous, they were certainly

taught to think our councils irresolute, distracted, and unstable; but both, I hope, will return from their errors, and exchange the sword for a more rational mode of arbitration.

Dr. Price, being to consider the justice of the war, recites all the pleas that may be offered by the state in support of coercive measures. Those pleas he supposes to be, *The necessity of war to preserve the unity of the empire: our superiority: our pretensions as the parent state: the return due for our benefits: our sovereignty in the territory of America.* The Doctor will own, that union is at least a desirable object, and will pardon our endeavours to preserve it, by the same means that states, the most moderate, have employed for this purpose; the policy of a common interest, a common sense of duty, and the authority of a common government. If any one contend, that we ought to rely on either of the former principles to the exclusion of the latter, and that we ought to resign either the authority or the force which government on occasion must exert, I should suspect that he does not wish to have us united, nor even to leave us possessed of the common resources for the preservation of peace and good order, that all nations have employed within their dependencies.

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I mean not to argue from the second topic. Nations do not found obligations of allegiance and duty on difference of wealth, numbers of people, or the supposed precedency of scholars and learned men. I hope the remaining title, however, will not be so slightly treated. The name of Parent State is not an empty sound. It carries the authority by which civil rights are established and modified. If America derive nothing from this authority, why did its settlers take any charters from the crown of Great-Britain? Or if they were emancipated by these charters, why is not their emancipation expressed in some such terms as the following? *Whereas certain persons mean to depart this our kingdom and form states apart, we hereby emancipate such persons, discharge their allegiance to us, and discontinue our protection.* If, on the contrary, they took possession of their settlements by grants of the Crown, if they have been uniformly considered as British subjects, amenable to the law and under the protection of the state, what title have they now to withdraw their allegiance because their settlements were made in America, any more than if they had been on Hounslow-Heath or on Finchley-Common? The charters, the precedents, the statutes on which this right of the state is founded, can no more be disputed than the charters, precedents,

and statutes on which the constitution of the state, respecting any other part of its power, is established. The utmost any party can plead is, that circumstances are changed, and require a new system of policy, or at least some additional precautions, to give to the British subjects of America the same security, or a security as nearly as possible the same, with that which is enjoyed by their fellow-subjects at home.

Exaction of gratitude is but an ungracious plea; the fact is, that the state protected and encouraged that part of her subjects on the same mixed motives of political interest and affection, that she protects and encourages every other member of the community, and there is no other member that has not an equal title to reject the claim of gratitude. It may again be repeated, that considering what has passed between Great Britain and her Colonies, the Americans will be found to act an odious part in this contest; they are not satisfied with the enjoyment of their municipal governments, and such a mode of contributing to the supplies of the empire, as may be consistent with the safety of their persons and their properties.

The sovereignty of a territory, and the property of its land, every where admits of a distinction.

tion. The state is undoubtedly sovereign of all the territory on which any of her subjects, under her protection, and by her charters and grants, have made any settlements; and the territory of North America was, and is subject to all the claims of sovereignty under the limitation of statutes and charters. I write from memory, but appeal to the original deeds, whether some of them did not give an exemption from Taxation during a limited time, with an evident implication, that at the expiration of that term they should be subject to taxation like other British subjects. And whether others did not limit taxation to specific duties, mentioned with a like implication, that the right of taxation was entire while the exercise of that right was restricted.

But Dr. Price is willing to plead *, that the Colonies did settle under the faith of charters, and we must admit, that they have a right to all the immunities and exemptions granted them by statute, or by charter under the authority of statute; but let not their advocates plead the authority of charters in one page and reject them in the next. It is certain, that the Colonies were planted on the authority of law, and

* P. 40.

never aspired to establish their privilege on a higher base. It is likewise probable, that all of them, at their first settlement, would have embraced, as an ample security of their property, an exemption from every burden besides that of parliamentary taxation. How far this security may now be deemed sufficient, I am willing to leave as a subject of better and more able discussion.

The remainder of Dr. Price's observations on the justice of the war tend to prove, that the past or present state of the constitution respecting the Colonies, is not precisely what it ought to be in the present state of the empire, nor such as it ought to be in the event of farther changes, of which he has stated the possible contingency; and in this I do not pretend to decide, but hope that persons better qualified will bring it to proper trial, not of force, but of political expediency and national wisdom.

Dr. Price, in the 2d Section of the 2d Part of his Pamphlet, in which he inquires, *whether the war with America is justified by the principles of the constitution*, affects to consider the Americans as a separate people; and inquires, *whether the war be made to establish our constitution among them*. If this question has any meaning at all,

I apprehend it should stand, Whether, by the present constitution of the state, the Legislature of Great Britain is in possession of a right to impose taxes and to enact laws binding in America? If they be in possession of such a right, have they been known to abuse it? They have been in possession of the right, and scarcely at all exerted it. But the Americans are now alarmed, and think that this right may be abused; let them come forward, therefore, and urge the precautions necessary to be taken against this abuse. If they will accept of no security below that of independency, and total separation of commonwealth; this, I apprehend, they must acquire at the point of the sword. But other and better remedies for the evil may yet be expected from the councils of a state that has been as remarkable for moderation, as for resolution in the conduct of great affairs.

Advocates in this cause perpetually quote the spirit and principles of the British constitution against the letter and the fact. Do they mean its primæval state, the intention of its founder, or something else, that they fancy concerning it? Its primæval state is very little known; and if it were, could not be admitted as the rule of proceeding in opposition to subsequent establishments and compacts. In that stage which is
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called the feudal constitution, the King had his domain or royal estate, and had no other claim on his subjects but their personal services in his wars. When he wanted some extraordinary supply, he summoned his vassals together, and made his proposition to them for that purpose; they deliberated and refused, or granted sometimes in commutation for military services, and sometimes as a voluntary gift. The Constitution was gradually raised upon these foundations. The Parliament became what it is, and the state in possession of a maxim, that the King can raise no supplies without consent of Parliament. This is the origin, and this is the fact in our constitution; and right or wrong, till within these few years, or few months, within the British territory of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, Parliament was supposed omnipotent and irresistible: what change may now be made to accommodate forms to new situations, I hope may still be determined by a better decision than that of the sword. But, till that is determined, I hope, that every good subject will pay a proper respect to the fact, and the letter of the constitution, whatever fancy he may have about the spirit of it. We may wish for improvements in the laws of the state, but till these are made, we must abide by the law as it stands.

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In the next Section*, Dr. Price brings in question the policy of the war with America. There is, in fact, no apology can be made for any war, besides the necessity of it to maintain some right, and some right that is worth contending for at this expence. Whether Great Britain has any such right now at stake, and by what steps this right came to be brought in hazard, are two separate questions.

I must maintain, that until our union is legally dissolved, the American Colonies are a part of the British empire. That acts of sovereignty, from which Great Britain might, or did derive, material advantage, were exerted by the legislature of Great Britain. That the act of navigation, the acts limiting trade, the appointment of governors and other civil officers, the establishment of a revenue, however inconsiderable, were all of them acts of sovereignty, in which the state and people of Great Britain are deeply interested. That the interest of Great Britain, constituted by these acts of sovereignty, is now in imminent hazard; and in all human probability, to be secured by that force alone with which the state shall appear to be armed in support of its own rights. So much has been said

* P. 50.

for the Americans in this country, and they have met with so little control in their own, that their pretensions are likely to rise. If they prevail by force in reducing the power of legislation, will they not take the same opportunity to reduce the navigation act, and other every right of sovereignty? What is to hinder their proceeding to assume that independency, which is so roundly prescribed to them under the denomination of Liberty? Are they not getting fast into a situation, in which the sovereignty of the Crown is likely to become as odious, at least to their leaders, as the power of the Legislature itself? One man is brought from behind the counter, to be member of a sovereign Congress; another to be one of five that wield the executive power of a great empire: others are promoted proportionally, though to inferior stations; and may entertain hopes of rising to the highest: one man is raised from a dealer in horses to be a general, another from a barber to be a colonel; all of them, I make no doubt, well qualified for the stations they fill: but whether they be or no, likely to be fond of their dignities, and unwilling to part with them; ready to employ all their authority, all their credit, all the force they can command to prevent the return of peace, which must bring the downfall of their power, and send them again to their

their trades and their obscurity; what but a proper force, and a proper aspect of determination, on the part of Great Britain, can bring such persons as these to reason, or deliver out of their hands the bulk of the sober and the industrious people of America? who, seeing their properties and their peace at stake, will be glad to return to the bosom of the state, and be happy to receive such satisfaction on the future security of their property and civil rights, as I hope no generous or candid mind can ever entertain any idea of refusing them.

Men are indeed, as Dr. Price observes, too apt to be governed by the lust of power, by revenge, and by other detestable passions. But are these passions unknown in America? Have the leaders in this revolt no ambition, no revenge to gratify, or would it be prudent in any administration to trust to the moderation and candor of parties, who have soared already so high above the condition of subjects, and who have such an interest in perpetuating a breach to which they owe so much personal consequence?

It may be confessed, that as matters now stand, the Americans are not likely to acknowledge the most evident rights of Great Britain, farther than those rights are supported by force.

But it will be asked, How came we into this situation? Is not the war, though necessary now, the sequel of many unnecessary steps, that being discontinued in time, would have prevented it entirely? It may be so, and so have been the greater number of wars that have afflicted mankind. Disputes arise, provocations become reciprocal, and evils accumulate. The beginnings are admitted, because no body perceives the end; and every fool is a wise man after the event has shewn him what was coming.

I am willing to own, that Dr. Price is inclined to censure measures, rather than to strike at men. That for this purpose he recalls to our memory, the policy of many years, fraught with instruction to those who are now to act on the scene of public affairs. He predicts, though I hope rashly, the loss of America; and to make us sensible how much we are to lose, he paints in the most favourable colours, the happy state at which that country at the beginning of these hostilities had arrived, and the growing importance of its trade to Great Britain. I hope, however, it will be remembered, that the Colonies arrived at this happy state under the influence of British policy, and under the undisputed right of the British Legislature to bind them in all cases whatsoever: and as we have so long prospered together, under
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this policy; that the Doctor's prediction may still prove false; that a moderate share of public spirit and good intention, on that side of the water as well as on this, may still save to all parties their reciprocal advantages, without incurring the inconvenience that either apprehends. But for this purpose, as we are perpetually alarmed with the hundreds of thousands that the Americans can arm, I am afraid that Britain must not come to the conference unarmed, or in a fit to be insulted.

I write in every page on the supposition that negotiation may take place; and who, but infernal spirits, would ever go to war with any other intention than to obtain an equitable peace. The party on whose side the aversion to treaty lies, will be answerable for the consequence.

As for the trade of America, I am ready to allow it as high as the advocates of America are pleased to make it. Be it granted that we sold them our goods at our own price; but unless this price was a higher than we received from other markets, unless it was better paid, I do not see why this trade is preferable to any other vent for our commodities. Even if the price were higher, which I am told it was not, the flow

returns of this market rendered it less profitable than many others we have had and still may have.

But have the Americans a right to withdraw their trade from our merchants and manufacturers, as well as their supplies from the state? If they have not, why should it be supposed that they mean to carry the lines of separation beyond the bounds which they themselves, and their advocates, affect to prescribe. Trade is the child of interest, and will follow where its parent leads. But the right of sovereignty must be maintained by authority, and sometimes by force. The subjects of Great Britain do not claim a right of sovereignty, neither in Europe nor in America; but they expect from each other, and from the Americans, the reasonable co-operation of fellow-subjects; and the state itself must maintain its sovereignty in both. If any part of the monarchy withdraw its allegiance, the remainder must repel such an insult with their blood.

We are, in this argument, threatened with the attacks of enemies from abroad, while we are engaged in a war with our Colonies. But the advocates of America, it is hoped, do not wish that the state of Great-Britain should bow
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the head to foreign nations, as well as to her own subjects. If our quarrel be momentous and just, we must support it or perish, be the enemy who he will. But we have had our wars, and none of our enemies have yet had cause to rejoice in the effect of their arms against us. I am, however, inclined to believe, that this alarm, as it is injurious to the honour of nations with whom we are at peace on the faith of treaties, so it is injurious to their sagacity, and discernment of their own political interest. What are they likely to gain by erecting the colonies of North-America into a power independent of Britain? Will their own Colonies become more dutiful after this example of a supposed successful revolt? Or will they have less to fear in behalf of their West-India settlements, from this rising confederacy, than they have from Britain? The new enemy will be nearer to those settlements, and have many more advantages in seizing them, than the old.

Few persons are qualified to enter the lists with Dr. Price, on the subject of accounts and calculations; but this alone will not enable us, in particular cases, to decide the great questions of national right. Paper-currency and public debt are the consequences of a fortunate constitution, and of an unlimited credit both public
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and private. They have given us the advantage in many a contest to forces superior to our own ; and the evil, though great, by our Author's account, is susceptible of a cure. It is probably in order to urge this cure, that the desperate state of the patient is so much explored. Such admonitions go home to Ministers of State, who can verify or disprove the facts, and will not be shaken by false allegations. The people, however, are in more danger, and in the most flourishing time of the Public, may suffer as much from a false alarm of bankruptcy, as they could from a real one. A false and wanton alarm of fire, in a crowded theatre, has cost many lives ; but they who alarm us so loudly on the subject of public credit, may have the consolation to know, that their own accounts are not fully credited, otherwise we should have the people of England crowding into every avenue that leads to the Bank, and treading each other to death, with an eager haste to get forward while any cash was to be had for their paper.

Most people, however, believe, that it is not necessary for a great kingdom to have all its riches in cash ; and even the example of the Americans, whose advantages Dr. Price is not on the present occasion inclined to decry, will serve to prove, that a people, with no better resource

source than a paper circulation, may rush into the midst of alarming convulsions. The Americans have reason to believe, that their country will be a seat of war, and yet carry on their operations with paper. *Will not the landing of a few troops on their coasts, insurrections threatening a revolution of government, or events that produce a general panic, operate in America as they would do in Europe ?** And put an end there, as it would any where else, to the subsistence of armies, and to every species of traffic that depends on the faith of paper, or the credit of a government that supposes a revolution in order to give it any being.

But if in the present contest with America our revenue is likely to decline, and if the whole of it be scarcely adequate to the difficulties in which we are involved ; this does not appear a proper argument to convince us, that we ought not to expect any aid from America ; nor is it a very liberal apology for the Americans refusing to bear any part of the burden, of which a considerable part was incurred in their own cause. In their cause singly, if they persist and prevail in gaining that Liberty of independence which is now pointed out to them ; but in our

* P. 77.

common cause if they continue united with us, and bear a just proportion of our burdens.

In stating the *honour of the nation as affected by the war with America*, Dr. Price supposes, that the claims of the state are wrong, and that the resistance of the Colonies is just. On this supposition, the argument is unanswerably for him; and the concessions of justice, however late, would, at least to our fellow-subjects, be honourable. But this, I humbly conceive, is begging the question. Hitherto the State has proceeded in the tract of precedents, and followed the rules of law and of charters. If a change be expected, the grounds of it should be laid in amicable representation, not in open war and hostility. Nations are like private men, they may commit errors, but must not suffer themselves to be kicked even into reason. When the parties are once armed, a great nation must attend to its reputation, as well when it sheaths as when it employs the sword. If the Americans refuse upon any terms, whether in conjunction with, or in subordination to the Parliament of Great-Britain, to furnish any part of the public supplies, it is by no means necessary, in order to justify the use of the sword against them, that they invade this island. If a person refuse the payment of his just debts, he may be compelled

compelled to do right in his own habitation, no less than if he had actually entered with violence the house of his creditor.

We are said to assume as much power over the Americans as either the Genoese or the French could assume over the Corsicans. The State of Great-Britain had assumed nothing but the power of protecting her Colonies, when her constitutional powers in America began to be denied, and her authority spurned. What has happened since is surely matter of regret, at least, if not of just censure, to the warmest friends of America. A daring breach of peace and violence to property was committed, and went unpunished. Direct war has been levied in return for penal statutes. And instead of reparation to their fellow-citizens for the damage done by the citizens of Boston, we are told, that they are an independent republic, and no longer accountable to the laws.

We are bid to think of the allies of the Romans in Italy, how they claimed to be enrolled as citizens of Rome; how they fought, and how the state perished in the struggle. The claim of those allies was, by every reasonable person, thought to be fraught with disorder and public ruin. It was strenuously opposed by the most

candid and virtuous citizens of Rome. The multitude of the people, in the place of assembly, but too often made a scene of confusion. It was not thought necessary to bring an accession of the whole populace of Italy to swell the tumult. The event of the war was fatal to Rome; not because the claim of the allies was refused, as Dr. Price seems to insinuate, but because it was granted; and the sequel proved a striking example of what the Doctor does not seem to apprehend, that the power of the people is not the good of the people. Their liberty sunk as their power increased, and perished at last by the very hands that were employed in support of the popular cause.

We are bid to consider* how far we are likely to succeed in the present war. The reader will please to observe, that success in war is a term of uncertain meaning. It may stand for the extermination of an enemy on the one hand, or for the most equitable terms of peace that can be obtained on the other. If the Doctor means the first, I hope that we shall not succeed. If he means the second, I hope we shall succeed; and if the Americans be actuated by any thing short of frenzy, they will not resign

* Section V.

their property and their peace, burn their own towns, and fly to the desert, as the Doctor insinuates, to avoid embracing us once more as their brethren, and concurring with us upon some equitable and safe ground, in supporting the common cause of the state. This I shall call victory; and a victory to all the ingenuous and well-informed natives of America, as well as to those of the same description in Britain.

- Some individuals among them, who meet in Congress, or stand at the head of armies, as the Lords of America, may think the reunion of the Empire a defeat; but to every one else, I hope, it will appear a new æra of prosperity, and glory to the state.

Dr. Price supposes *, contrary to the lesson of independence, which, under the denomination of Liberty he has read to the Americans, that they may still be willing to remain in the bosom of the state, and on the same bottom with their fellow-subjects in Britain: But in what sense, and to what effect, remain on the same bottom with us? Will they acknowledge the law of the state, and contribute some reasonable proportion toward its support? Will they be contented with a reasonable security, admitted in

* P. 101.

the form of granting this supply, that it shall not be augmented without their own consent? If ever any such proposal had come from America, I am persuaded it might have served as the foundation of friendship, and terminated in some happy arrangement. But if, by maintaining their union with us, they only mean to continue the practice of calling upon our fleets and armies to defend them when attacked, without contributing any thing to support the power that protects them, I do not see what interest the state has in this union. Nay, but they are willing to leave us the command of their trade. I confess I do not see the wisdom of this policy on the part of America; we are arrived at an age of experience, in which all parties might see the expedience of exchanging restrictions on trade for compensations in revenue. If the state were disposed to oppress, she might do so as effectually by restrictions on trade, as by impositions of taxes. And I believe, that if the Parliament of Great Britain, in its disputes with the Crown, had chosen rather to leave the trade of the people at its mercy, than to grant its supplies, the Public would have long since suffered severely by the choice.

I am sorry that Dr. Price should endeavour to flatter the Americans on a supposed aversion of

the people of Great Britain to this war, or impute to this circumstance the supposed slow progress made in recruiting the army. The nursery of the army in this country consists in the supernumeraries of our manufacturers, and labouring hands. Had the American leaders, by shutting their ports on our traders, distressed us as they proposed, recruits for the army would have been but too easily found; but as matters now stand, our armaments must increase with their usual pace. If, to avoid loading the public, by means of new levies, with an enormous half-pay list at the end of the war, it is to be opened with a supply of foreign troops, I hope it will close with them too; and that in whatever manner the first army that goes to America is composed, it will satisfy the people of that country that peace with Great Britain is better than war.

I am farther sorry, that Dr. Price should flatter the Americans on the subject of their own strength, and of our weakness. If the Doctor were pleased to recollect a few more of the passages of history, with which he is so well acquainted, he would observe, that no general, being to invade a country, thought himself obliged to have an army in numbers equal to the natives; and that most of the unhappy conquests

quests recorded in the history of mankind were made with small armies, who, having the superiority of discipline, made a progress the more rapid that their numbers were few: in short, that small armies have done more than I hope the arms of Great Britain will have to do in America; they have reduced, and kept in subjection, extensive countries, replenished with numbers of people, not of the weak and effeminate alone, but of the most warlike and fiercest nations that are known in history.

The Romans, a little before the second Punic war*, mustered in Italy seven hundred thousand foot, and seventy thousand horse; yet this country was invaded by Hannibal with twenty thousand foot, and six thousand horse†: The greatest part of it was reduced, and remained in the hands of this enemy for sixteen years. With how small an army did Cæsar reduce four hundred independent Nations, and fierce nations in Gaul? With how few did he afterwards invade Italy itself, and with how few did he reduce the whole Roman Empire? Were the Saxons that landed in Britain superior to the Britons; the Danes to the Saxons, or the Normans to the English? On this point, therefore, I should be sorry to flatter the Americans. The distractions

* Polyb. lib. ii. c. 24. † Ibid. lib. iii. c. 60.

that

that arise in a country that is invaded, turn the superiority of numbers into disorder and weakness. The Americans have not yet met the British soldiers on the plain, and when they do, their numbers, I imagine, will not avail them much.

I have as high a sense of what men ought, and will do, in defence of their liberties, as any man: But I flatter myself, in the present case, that, unless the Americans mistake independence and separation of commonwealth for Liberty, that they will not think themselves called upon to try the force of this principle.

I should willingly, with Dr. Price, in the close of his pamphlet, or while he is hastening to the conclusion*, rejoice in the prospect of a power growing in America that shall astonish the world. If it were not proposed to raise this power by dismembering the state of Great Britain, and by stripping her of a branch she has nourished with so much care, and which by having partaken with her in every national advantage, is now in condition to bear an equitable part in her burdens; and which certainly, on every principle of justice, human and divine,

* Page 103.

is not now entitled to say, we need you no longer, and will take no farther part in your affairs.

I confess that I think, when the cause of our country is at stake, impartiality is but a doubtful virtue. It may be noble to wish that our country should do no wrong, and it may be lawful to stay her hand when rashly lifted up against the weak and the helpless; but when swords are drawn, to beat down that of a friend while the enemy is striking, I am afraid, is perfidy.

The Americans, it is true, are not come here to invade us; but they withhold the rights of Great Britain, and oblige us to invade them, which is a no less justifiable ground of hostility. When citizens of Great Britain anticipate with joy the independent or separate greatness of America, it is natural to suppose, that they think the dismemberment of this empire will bring us back only to what we were about a century ago; diminish our luxury, give a check to many vices, and by landing us down a few steps on the scale, only renew our endeavours to remount again. This, however, is not of a piece with the history of mankind; nations in their progress, though weak and inferior to
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their neighbours, spurn their condition, and continue to advance from the bottom to the top of the scale. But nations that have been high can seldom bear a fall; they sink in the scale with a retrograde motion as rapid as they advanced. Is Great Britain then to be sacrificed to America; the whole to a part, and a state which has attained high measures of national felicity, for one that is yet only in expectation, and which, by attempting such extravagant plans of Continental Republic, is probably laying the seeds of anarchy, of civil wars, and at last of a military government, so much that, in this great contest, Dr. Price might have ventured to say, that the friends as well as the enemies of America may not *know what they are doing?*

I am happy to find in the conclusion of this Pamphlet *, that Dr. Price, notwithstanding the language of independence which he has taught the Americans, is pleased to repeat with some expressions of approbation, a motion for peace, suggested by a noble Lord, in which the union, dependency, and participation of America in the burdens of the Empire are included as part of the plan. The proposal does honour to the noble Lord; and if it had actually come from

* Page 103.

America, I should have thought it an equitable ground upon which to open a council of deliberation with the most friendly intentions. I should have prayed that, while the deliberations were open, parties would agree to a cessation of arms, and a suspension of penal statutes. But I see not the use of fabricating plans, of which the first step always is a concession on the part of the state, without any overture of submission on the part of its subjects. These subjects have treated plans of the minority with the same contempt that they have treated acts of Parliament or resolutions of the majority, and seem to be determined to bring this contest to an issue more agreeable to the enemies of Great Britain than to its citizens and friends.

P. S. I know not how the tenets of any party may be affected by what I write, but my paper is now in your hands; if you publish it, I shall become the Author of a Pamphlet; and in that case beg of you to remember, that we Pamphlet-writers of every condition mistake ourselves for statesmen, and so decide and advise without reserve. But that, not being singular, you will treat me no worse than you have done others of the same description. Our esteem with many is fallen; but our consequence with a warm-hearted and reasoning people, who like
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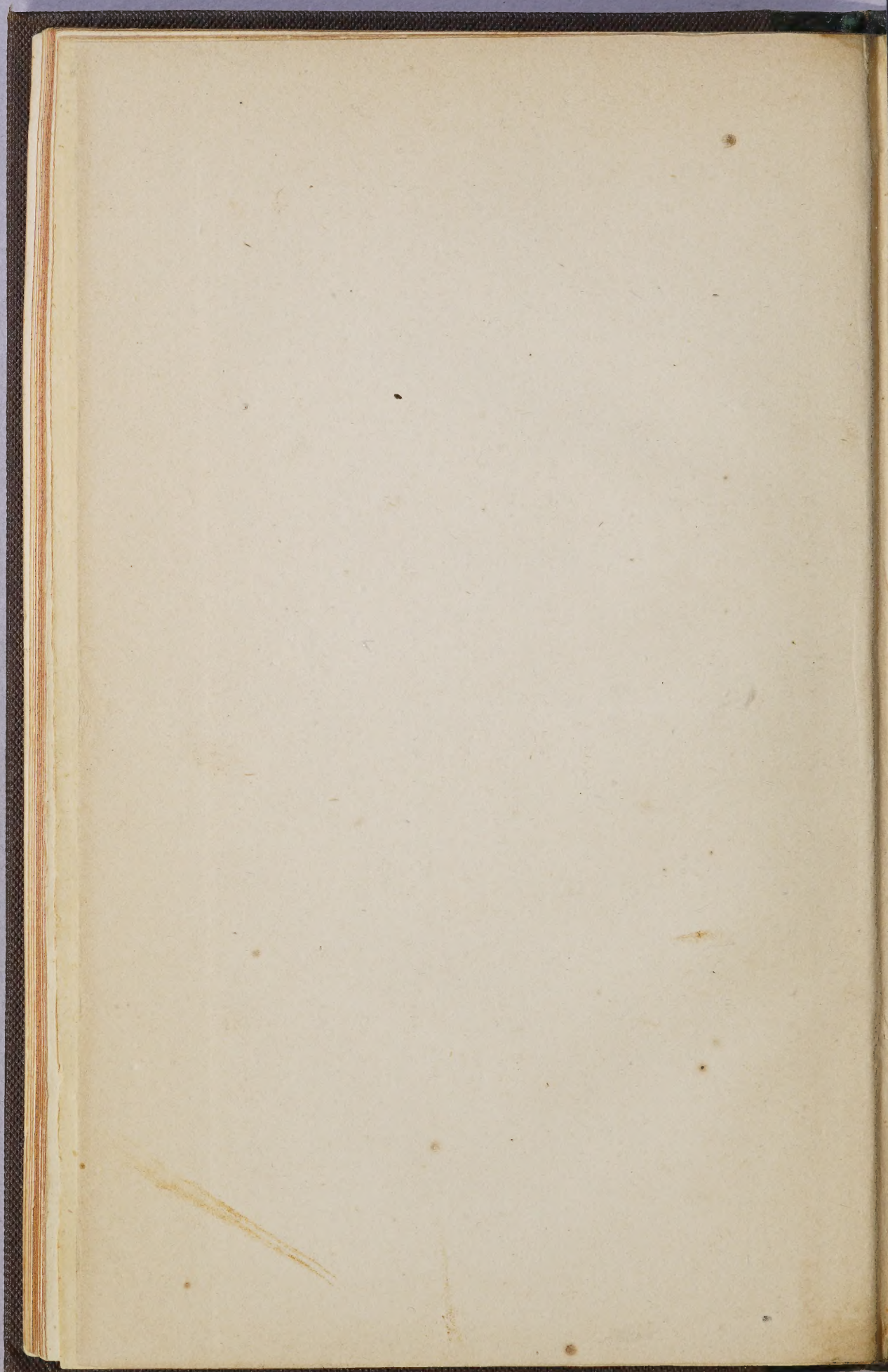
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to be consulted in their own affairs, merits the interposition of the best informed and best intentioned persons in the kingdom. My small pretensions being only to a share of the last gratification, I hope to meet with some indulgence on the first. And am,

Your's, &c.

THE END.





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